



## STAFF CARER'S PASSPORT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1.0 WHO IS THE STAFF CARER'S PASSPORT FOR?

- 1.1 The staff carer's passport is aimed at staff who provide unpaid care and support to a partner, family member or friend due to their disability, health condition, frailty, mental health concern, addiction or other health and care need.
- 1.2 The staff carer's passport can be completed by any staff member who has caring responsibilities that they believe could impact on their ability to work currently or at some point in the future.

### 2.0 WHY SHOULD I USE A STAFF CARER'S PASSPORT?

- 2.1 The purpose of the staff carer's passport is to enable a carer and their manager to hold supportive and open conversations to discuss and document the flexibilities needed to support the carer in combining caring and work.
- 2.2 The conversation involves balancing the staff member's needs with the needs of the department within existing Trust policies.
- 2.3 The passport aims to minimise the need to re-negotiate these flexibilities every time a staff member moves post, moves between departments or is assigned a new line manager.

### 3.0 IS THE STAFF CARER'S PASSPORT COMPULSORY FOR THOSE WITH HEALTH CONDITIONS?

- 3.1 The staff carer's passport is not compulsory, and it is up to the member of staff if they want to use it. Managers can encourage staff to use a staff carer's passport, but will not force a member of staff to use one.

### 4.0 WHO OWNS THE STAFF CARER'S PASSPORT?

- 4.1 This document belongs to the employee, and their line manager should have a copy. The passport relies on sensitivity, leaving it ultimately down to the carer to determine how much personal information they wish to share.
- 4.2 All information will remain confidential between the line manager and the carer and not be shared unless prior agreement is granted from the carer.



## 5.0 HOW OFTEN SHOULD THE STAFF CARER'S PASSPORT BE REVIEWED?

- 5.1 The passport is designed to be a 'live' document. Therefore, it should be reviewed annually and in response to any changes in the nature or impact of the caring responsibilities.
- 5.2 When a staff carer passport is reviewed (either an action or the passport overall), a change in line manager, or an employee moves to a new role; the staff carer passport does not guarantee that the previously agreed arrangements will remain in place.

## 6.0 WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STAFF CARER PASSPORT?

6.1

Employee	Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engage in open and frank conversations with their manager(s).</li><li>Administration of the staff carer passport (if you are able to).</li><li>Safe storage which protects confidentiality.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>After the initial meeting, set an appropriate review cycle to discuss future caring responsibilities.</li><li>Ensure appropriate referrals to support services are made</li><li>Support the member of staff to complete, maintain and update the staff carer passport.</li><li>Be prepared to consider a range of different flexible working requests for caring reasons.</li></ul>

## 7.0 Employee responsibilities

- 7.1 Completion of the staff carer passport is voluntary. The staff member has complete control over the content and retains ownership throughout. The Trust recognises that individuals may find it difficult to talk through personal issues and challenges and will offer support as appropriate.
- 7.2 Complete sections 1-4, including as much detail as appropriate, which the manager needs to know about. Provide the manager with a copy and arrange to meet to discuss the details.
- 7.3 The meeting provides the opportunity to discuss the issues identified. It may be helpful to talk through the following questions (this list is not exhaustive).
- What are the caring responsibilities?
  - How do they affect work?
  - What impact does work have on the caring responsibilities?
  - Does the employee already receive any support to help combine caring with work?
  - What further support would help?
  - Does a flexible working application need to be considered to continue the caring responsibilities?
  - If unable to come to work, agree on how to communicate with the manager?
  - What would help ensure the needs of the team/department continue to be met?
  - Is any further support needed from occupational health, counselling service or external organisations?
  - Is any equipment needed in the department to support a combined role, e.g. a mobile phone or laptop?
  - Are the caring responsibilities expected to change in the future?

- 7.4 While it is up to the employee to decide how much detail to share, it is important to provide enough information for the manager to understand any issues and challenges.
- 7.5 Any actions agreed, and a review date should be entered on the staff carer passport and a copy given to the manager. Remember to follow the procedures in the relevant Trust policy if, for example, making a flexible working application.
- 7.6 You should review the passport if your personal circumstances or job role change, and it should be reviewed at least every 12 months.

## **8.0 Manager responsibilities**

- 8.1 The Trust aims to create a climate in which the member of staff is confident that they can disclose information, without fear of discrimination or harassment, about the challenges faced in combining caring responsibilities and work. As a manager, actions and decisions are of great importance in considering any steps which might be taken to assist the staff member in work. The staff carer passport is designed to help do this.
- 8.2 Managers should treat information in the staff carer passport and discussions with individuals about the caring responsibilities in the strictest confidence.
- 8.3 When a staff carer passport is received from a staff member, a one-to-one meeting should be arranged as soon as possible. Before the meeting, review the relevant Trust policies. (i.e. Work Life Balance Policy)
- 8.4 It is for the individual to decide how much information to disclose about the caring role. However, it is important that, as a manager, you understand how it affects day-to-day work and what support can be offered to the staff member. Managers have a responsibility to balance requests from all staff member's.
- 8.5 The types of flexible adjustments to consider with the staff member are:
- options for flexible working including part-time and home working, compressed hours and job sharing
  - use of flexible working to cover appointments etc
  - arrangements for notifying and making cover arrangements for immediate, short term crises
  - any likely need for paid or unpaid special leave or an unpaid career break
  - any issues around working temporarily in a different location if the person being cared for does not live locally
- 8.6 Agreements on these and other issues should be recorded in the staff carer passport, and regular reviews set to discuss any changes.
- 8.7 Managers should refer to the relevant Trust policies, for example, where the carer wants to change their working pattern.
- 8.8 It is important to remember that the staff carer passport belongs to the member of staff involved and is confidential. Therefore, should the manager move to another post, the staff carer passport should not be passed to the next manager without the permission of the staff member concerned. Nor should the manager send it to the manager if the member of staff moves post unless they give permission.
- 8.9 The Trust works in partnership with Carers Support West Sussex and hosts Colleagues as Carers Support Group. Available support and advice for all UHSussex staff can be provided by emailing [cccq.carerssupportwestsussex1@nhs.net](mailto:cccq.carerssupportwestsussex1@nhs.net) or calling

the response line on 0300 028 8888. Further information is also available via the UHSussex Intranet.

## **9.0 SHOULD THE CARER PASSPORT BE ELECTRONIC OR PAPER COPY?**

9.1 Ideally, the staff carer's passport would be electronic, making it easier to update and maintain. For members of staff that do not have access to a computer at work, the manager could complete the passport and print it off for both staff member and manager to sign and date.

## **10.0 WHERE CAN I GO FOR FURTHER HELP?**

10.1 You can contact the following for further information:

- Employee Relations HR Advice Line: [uhsussex.hradvice@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.hradvice@nhs.net) (legacy WSHT) and [uhsussex.employee.relations@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.employee.relations@nhs.net) (legacy BSUH).
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team: [uhsussex.western.equality@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.western.equality@nhs.net) (legacy WSHT) and [uhsussex.equality@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.equality@nhs.net) (legacy BSUH)
- The Trust works in partnership with Carers Support West Sussex and hosts Colleagues as Carers Support Group. Available support and advice for all UHSussex staff can be provided by emailing [cccg.carerssupportwestsussex1@nhs.net](mailto:cccg.carerssupportwestsussex1@nhs.net) or calling the response line on 0300 028 8888. Further information is also available via the UHSussex Intranet.
- Neighbouring Carer Support organisations: If you are a carer in another county you can access support and information via: Brighton and Hove [www.carershubs.co.uk](http://www.carershubs.co.uk), East Sussex [www.cftc.org.uk](http://www.cftc.org.uk), Surrey [www.actionforcarers.org.uk](http://www.actionforcarers.org.uk), Hampshire [www.carerstogether.org.uk](http://www.carerstogether.org.uk)
- Further sources of information can be found on the Carers UK website: <https://www.carersuk.org/>